



Using the FamilySearch Catalog Effectively

The **FAMILYSEARCH CATALOG** is a guide to family histories; birth, marriage and death records; census records; church registers; books, periodicals and many other records. The records described in the catalog come from places throughout the world. New items are catalogued daily and added to the website weekly. These records may be in a book, on microfiche or microfilm, searchable online or in a computer file. If a particular item is available at another Family Search Center, besides the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah, then a pull-down menu will indicate the locations where the item is available.

The **Family Search Catalog** has been made available via **WorldCat** since 2014. WorldCat is an online computer library of over 2 billion titles at 72,000 libraries in 172 countries and territories. You can do an interlibrary loan order at a local public library.

THERE ARE EIGHT TYPES OF SEARCH OPTIONS: You can use multiple search boxes in one search.

One of the most frequently used searches is the **Places** search. Places search is used to find records on three levels of government jurisdictions: **Town, County and State**. Check all jurisdictions when searching for records. First open www.FamilySearch.org, then go to search, then catalog.

1a. City and Town Records

EXERCISE We are looking for an ancestor who was born about **1812** in **Needham, Massachusetts**.

Places-Type> **Needham** and a dropdown list of places comes up.

Click on> United States, **Massachusetts, Norfolk, Needham**.

Click on> **Subjects**, type **Town Records**. (Why look at all jurisdictions?)

Notice the **Add** button to add to print list.

Click on the years > **1711-1862**.

- Notes tell what is contained in the record.
- Subjects tell which subjects that record is filed under.
- Film notes tell where to find it and the film number **901849**

1b. County Records. (Do not type the word "county.")

EXERCISE We are looking for the will of our grandfather who died in **Price, Carbon County**, Utah around **1910**. It can be valuable to add the town to see other record possibilities, but probates are kept on the county level.

Places > Type **Carbon Utah** and a drop down list of places comes up.
Click > **United States, Utah, Carbon**.
Click > **Subjects**> Type **Probate Records**, search.
Click > **Probate Records and Registers, 1895-1966. (Important)**
Scroll to "Film Notes." The catalog has both Probate Registers and Probate Records
(what is an index and record?)
What is our film number for the Probate Register we want to look at? Year **1910** film no. **484628** is a register, film no. **484632** is the record.

1c. State Records.

EXERCISE: We are looking for the **Mills** family in **Maine** but we don't know the county, so we need to search for statewide records.

Places type > **Maine** and a drop down list of places comes up
click on > **United States, Maine**>
click on > **Subjects** search and
type **vital records**> Scroll down and
click on>**Vital Records 1892-1907**> Scroll down the page to **Film Notes** (When training I was putting in death certificates and nothing came up, be careful what you put in search box)
DON'T GO ONLINE
Hold down the "Control key and the letter F key" together and then type MILL
Find the film that contains the Mills Family for this time period. #10,000
Where is the film Located?
The 3 Format Icons on right # 1- search the index, #2- browse the images online #3 order to be sent to your local FHC nearest to you
The records are also available online. Click on [here](#), you can search by typing a name or Browse through the images.

2. Surnames.

Surnames search is helpful in finding Catalog entries for published family histories and other compiled works that include a specific surname. Surname search is best if you have an uncommon surname. For common surnames like Jones, Smith or Williams a Keyword search works better.

EXCERISE: We are looking for the published works for the surname **Bartlett** and are hoping to find some information in the **1800's**.

Click on **Surnames** search> type **Bartlett**> search> (how many items come up) filter by year 1800

Click on the **Bartlett Family Bible Records**, looks promising.
Scroll down to film notes, to see the location. What do we know about this film/fiche number?

3. TITLES.

The Titles search is used to find a source by its title. You do not need to know the whole title, just use the words you do know. The more of the title you type, the shorter the list of results will be.

EXERCISE: We want to know if the Library has the book entitled **Our West River Heritage**.

Type the Title in the Title search box.

Click > **Search**

What is the call number for the book and on which floor is the book found?

[Canadian Book Recently moved back to the 3rd floor](#)

Subject Class not the same as the full Call Number

4. AUTHOR:

This search is not restricted to an author.

Use this search to find the author details for a person, church, society, government agency, and other records identified as an author in the Catalog.

EXERCISE: We want to find out if the library has any books authored by **Pearson Corbett**.

Type the name of the Author > **Corbett**

How many books has he written? Click the "Control and letter F" keys and then type the word **HARDY**, this is a windows search function.

search in authors:

Type > **Military**

Type > **Quakers**

5. SUBJECTS:

This search is based on the Library of Congress subjects. Native Races, Nationalities, Occupations, Religious Groups and Languages, World History, Geography, Political Science, Law, Fine Arts, Medicine, Military and Naval Science and more. Specific Subjects are required in order to get a successful result.

EXERCISE: We need to find our grandparents in the Cherokee 1890 Census of Oklahoma.

Type > **Cherokee Census Oklahoma**, the catalog finds several results.

Add > **1890** to the words you have already typed, Click > **Search**

Find the source written by **Barbara L. Benge** and click on it. See the [third one down](#)

What are the 3 ways to view this census? On-line, CD-Rom, or book.

6. KEYWORDS:

This is the most versatile search in the Catalog. A Keyword search can help in locating authors, different subjects and other sources when not all the words are known.

EXERCISE: We would like to know if the Catalog has any information on **Welsh** families who settled in **North Carolina**.

This will be a Keyword Search

Type > **Welsh North Carolina**

How many results do you show?

Refine your search by adding **1820** in back of the North Carolina you have already typed in the search box.

EXERCISE: We were here at the Library years ago and found a book on the Baptist Church in South Carolina and we would like to look at again. The only words that we can remember are Padgett's Baptist Church with author's name of Sparks.

Keyword Search, Type > **Padgetts Baptist Church** >click search

What is the full title of the book?

What is the full name of the author?

7. CALL NUMBER:

Call number search can be used in helping us find the full call number of a book.

EXERCISE: We want to find a book about our ancestor who volunteered with some **Atlantic Canadians** from **Maine** during the **Civil War**, written by **Johnson**. We did not copy all the Catalog Call Number: Just **971.5M**.

7th one down, next to last one

What is the full title of the book?

What is the full name of the author? Daniel F. Johnson

What other searches could you have used? **Title, Author, Keyword**

8. FILM/FICHE NUMBER

Film/Fiche Number search is used to find a film or fiche by the Catalog number.

EXERCISE: We are searching the Catalog for information on our Fausett Family. We have film no. 1183536 item 13, but can't find it in the film cabinets.

Type in the film number **1183536**.

click on > **item 13**

Where is the film located? **International Film (located on B1)**

Why is it on International floor? **German film**

EXERCISE:

Type, film no. **6332770**, the source is a book titled **Leaves of the Past, 1828-1880, by Ruth Hughes Hitchcock**.

Is this a film? Where is it located in the Library?

EXTRA EXERCISE: RESEARCH WIKI

Search Research Wiki >

Search Box on Top Left or Right Side > Type > **Nicknames how to Find**